

# AGENCY SNAPSHOTS:

## Department of Business and Professional Regulation

by Colin M. Roopnarine

The Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) licenses and regulates one million professionals and businesses across the State of Florida. DBPR issues licenses ranging from talent agents to mold inspectors and real estate agents, and construction contractors to alcohol and tobacco manufacturers and professional boxers. DBPR’s mission is to “License Efficiently, Regulate Fairly.”

**The Agency Head:** Ken Lawson was appointed the Secretary of DBPR on May 2, 2011. A native Floridian and a graduate of Florida State University and the Florida State University College of Law, Secretary Lawson has spent more than 12 years serving and protecting the public in numerous regulatory positions. Secretary Lawson began his legal career in the United States Marine Corps, Judge

Advocate General’s Division and spent seven years serving as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Florida. After serving as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, Secretary Lawson was appointed the Assistant Secretary of Enforcement for the U.S. Department of the Treasury. In this capacity, Secretary Lawson was responsible for the oversight of several federal law enforcement agencies, including the U.S. Secret Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

In 2003, Secretary Lawson returned to the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Middle District of Florida where he defended the United States against civil claims. He was then appointed the Assistant Chief Counsel for Field Operations with the Department of Homeland Security’s Trans-

portation Security Administration, a position he held for several months before moving to the private sector.

In the private sector, Secretary Lawson spent two years consulting for Booz Allen Hamilton, including one year as Chief of Party for the Financial Crimes Prevention Project in Jakarta, Indonesia. He most recently served as Vice-President for Compliance at nFinanSe Inc., a financial services company in Tampa, where he was responsible for the company’s Bank Secrecy Act/Anti-Money Laundering program and its compliance with state money transmitter licensing regulations for 42 states.

Secretary Lawson can be contacted as follows: Office of the Secretary, 1940 North Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1000; Ph.: (850) 413-0755; Fax: (850) 921-4094.

**The Structure of DBPR:** DBPR’s

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## Joint Administrative Procedures Committee

by Jowanna N. Oates and Kenneth J. Plante

The Joint Administrative Procedures Committee (JAPC) is a joint standing committee of the Legislature. The Committee is comprised of six senators appointed by the President of the Senate and six representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House. JAPC’s duties are prescribed by Joint Rule 4.6 of the Legislature and Chapter 120, Florida Statutes. Among JAPC’s major functions are to review all proposed and existing agency rules to ensure that the rules are within the agency’s delegated legislative authority, and to exercise oversight of agency actions taken pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act.

**Coordinator:**  
Kenneth J. Plante  
111 West Madison Street  
Room 680

Tallahassee, FL 32399  
Phone: (850) 488-9110  
Fax: (850) 922-6934

The Coordinator of JAPC is a joint appointee of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Mr. Plante was appointed Coordinator in October, 2011. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Plante spent fifteen years in private practice, focusing on administrative and environmental law, and served as General Counsel of the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Natural Resources.

**Hours of Operation:**  
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday  
**Office Email:** [joint.admin.procedures@leg.state.fl.us](mailto:joint.admin.procedures@leg.state.fl.us)

**Practice Tips:** JAPC’s attorneys are available to answer questions concerning rulemaking. An individual interested in a proposed rule may track JAPC’s review on its website located at [www.japc.state.fl.us](http://www.japc.state.fl.us). The website provides links to correspondence to and from the Committee regarding administrative rules under review; provides links to DOAH challenges to a proposed rules; and provides the 90-day filing deadline dates for proposed rules. Additionally, the website contains links to publications such as the Committee’s annual report and the pocket guide to the Administrative Procedure Act. The website is a great place to begin legal research, as it has an annotated Chapter 120 database that includes law review and journal articles, case law, DOAH decisions, and Attorney General Opinions.